



Glycol Ethers

The information contained on this document was obtained from a variety of sources including the EPA, State of New Jersey, ATSDR and Maine industries. The release data is from required reporting to THWRP, the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and to EPA Toxics Release Inventory (TRI).

What is it?

Glycol ethers are part of a large group of manmade chemicals that are usually clear, colorless liquids.

What is it used for?

Glycol ethers are used as an ingredient in paper coating, as a solvent to help dyes settle into tanned hides, and as a component in certain printing inks.

Sources in Maine?

Paper Mills, Tanneries, and Printing Presses.

Where is it released?

It is released to air when coated paper is being dried, when solvents evaporate after being applied to tanned hides, and as escaping vapors when inks are applied and dried.

Human Health Effects?

Overexposure to glycol ethers can cause a shortage of red blood cells, intoxication similar to the effects of alcohol, and irritation of the eyes, nose, or skin. They have also been shown to reduce male sperm counts.

Environmental Effects?

Glycol ethers will break down over several days when released to air but, since they are volatile organic compounds, they contribute to ground level ozone when reacted with nitrogen oxides and sunlight.

2001 Releases In Maine

187,656 lbs

For more information please go to these websites: